

## Best week in subscription drive, 3 more to go over top!

BY EMMA JOHNSON

“There is no secret except we are really working at it,” Tom Fiske said by phone from Minneapolis Nov. 19. “We’ve found some sizable areas with industrial workers and a very good receptivity to the paper. Good experiences give confidence and you go for more.”

Minneapolis has climbed into the bold on the scoreboard in the international *Militant* subscription and Pathfinder books campaign after two good weeks. They doubled their sales compared to the weeks before.

“As we sell door to door,” Fiske said, “we also call people that we’ve met before who didn’t subscribe for one reason or another, but asked us to get back to them. And we contact readers whose subscriptions are expiring to see if they want to renew. Last week we got five or six subscrip-

Continued on page 3

| Fall ‘Militant’<br>subscription campaign |       |      |     |                                |
|--|-------|------|-----|--------------------------------|
| Oct. 12 - Dec. 10 (week 5)               |       |      |     |                                |
| Country                                  | quota | sold | %   | 2,500                          |
| UNITED STATES                            |       |      |     |                                |
| Lincoln                                  | 22    | 15   | 68% |                                |
| Twin Cities                              | 135   | 91   | 67% |                                |
| Philadelphia*                            | 135   | 86   | 64% |                                |
| San Francisco                            | 180   | 111  | 62% |                                |
| Atlanta                                  | 160   | 96   | 60% |                                |
| Boston                                   | 65    | 39   | 60% |                                |
| Los Angeles                              | 160   | 91   | 57% |                                |
| Seattle                                  | 160   | 88   | 55% |                                |
| New York                                 | 380   | 199  | 52% | Should<br>be<br>.....<br>1,464 |
| Chicago                                  | 180   | 86   | 48% |                                |
| Miami                                    | 95    | 45   | 47% |                                |
| Houston                                  | 110   | 50   | 45% |                                |
| Des Moines                               | 160   | 71   | 44% |                                |
| Washington                               | 90    | 38   | 42% |                                |
| Omaha                                    | 220   | 62   | 28% |                                |
| Total U.S.                               | 2252  | 1168 | 52% |                                |
| PRISONERS                                | 15    | 12   | 80% |                                |
| UNITED KINGDOM                           |       |      |     |                                |
| London                                   | 150   | 90   | 60% |                                |
| Manchester                               | 100   | 58   | 58% |                                |
| UK Total                                 | 250   | 148  | 59% |                                |
| CANADA                                   | 110   | 57   | 52% |                                |
| NEW ZEALAND                              | 80    | 42   | 53% |                                |
| AUSTRALIA                                | 75    | 37   | 49% |                                |
| Total                                    | 2782  | 1464 | 59% |                                |
| Should be                                | 2500  | 1563 | 63% |                                |
| *Raised goal                             |       |      |     |                                |

## Thousands killed, aid scarce after typhoon in Philippines

Unfolding social disaster product of capitalism



AP/Bullit Marquez

Working people were left to fend for themselves in areas hardest hit by powerful Typhoon Haiyan where they lived in housing incapable of withstanding recurring storms. Many now lack necessities of food, water, medicine and shelter. Above, Tacloban, Philippines, Nov. 17.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Nearly two weeks after Typhoon Haiyan ripped through the Philippine Islands Nov. 8, very little aid is reaching millions in need, especially in rural areas. The government’s refusal to evacu-

ate those living in harms way — resulting in thousands dead — and the social disaster that is unfolding highlight the indifference and contempt for the lives of working people that permeates every pore of social relations under capitalism.

The catastrophe was prepared by

Continued on page 6

## Oppressed Kurds defend their lands in Syria civil war

BY JOHN STUDER

Kurdish militias have routed al-Qaeda forces in northeast Syria, securing their control over more than 20 towns and villages. By late October, Kurdish forces had extended their control over most of Hasakah province. This ground, taken in the course of the Syrian civil war, is part of a broader rise in the struggle of the Kurdish people, an oppressed nationality of some 30 million concentrated in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria.

Of the more than 2 million Kurds

Continued on page 4

## Calif. rallies say, ‘Arrest cop who shot 13-year-old’

BY ERIC SIMPSON

SANTA ROSA, Calif. — “Justice for my grandson! His killer should spend time in jail,” Martha Cazares told the *Militant* at a protest rally of about 400 in Julliard Park here Nov. 9. Andy López, 13, was shot by Deputy Sheriff Erick Gelhaus Oct. 22, while walking down the street by a vacant field near his house carrying a toy gun.

“Andy was a child passing into ado-

Continued on page 4

## ‘Obamacare’ rollout highlights health care crisis for working class

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The botched rollout of the Affordable Care Act has created a political crisis for the Barack Obama administration, the Democratic Party and the capitalist rulers, who above all are seeking a way to protect the massive profits reaped from the health care “industry.” At the same time, they pursue the antagonistic goal of placating dissatisfaction among

### FIGHT FOR GOV’T-FUNDED UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE!

— See editorial page 9

working people over the declining quality and access to medical services.

Hailed as the signature accomplishment of the Obama administration, “Obamacare” was enacted in 2010 with the backing of substantial sections of the propertied rulers. Its main function is to subsidize the giant health insurance companies, among the key props of finance capital. And it helps some bosses to continue shed-

Continued on page 9

## Workers in Memphis fight Kellogg lockout after rejecting concessions



Militant/Susan LaMont

Locked-out members of BCTGM Local 252G. From left, Roderic Ashcroft, Tim Watkins, Perry Harris, Roberta Hall-Conway, local President Kevin Bradshaw and Audrey Curry.

BY SUSAN LAMONT

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — “We are in for a hard fight,” Gary Amerson, 57, one of 226 workers locked out by Kellogg Company at its cereal plant here, told the *Militant* during a Nov. 14 visit to the picket line. “We are not trying to get much. We’re trying to keep the company from taking away what we have.”

The workers, members of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union Local 252G, were locked out by the food processing giant Oct. 22. The

Continued on page 9

## Also Inside

‘Changing Face of US Politics’ published, reviewed in Iran 2

Anti-immigrant ordinance debated in Nebraska town 5

Bangladesh garment workers fight for higher wages, safety 6

New contributors, raised goals boost Party-Building Fund 6



# ‘Workers in their millions will revolutionize society’

‘Changing Face of US Politics’ published, reviewed in Iran

Below is a review by the Iran Book News Agency of The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions, published in Iran by Talaye Porsoo, which translated the Pathfinder Press book into Farsi from the original English. The semiofficial news agency published the review Oct. 25, and an excerpt from the book appeared in its “One Page Out of Thousands” column Nov. 1. Translation of the review is by the Militant.

## IN REVIEW

BY SAMIRA SARKHANZADEH

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions seeks to show its readers how workers in their millions, through intensifying their political struggles, will revolutionize their unions and all of society.

Authored by Jack Barnes, the book describes the unfolding events that began with the 1974-75 world economic downturn, the first generalized recession since the 1930s. Within this framework the author examines the social consequences as well as the actual and potential resistance by working people.

Shohreh Izadi [of Talaye Porsoo Publications] decided to translate this book because rarely does one find books that tell the story from within the United States and attempt to place social developments there in the context of world and historic events.

Readers will find issues deep in American society that are novel and

little known — issues that are generated by the social and historic interactions of sections of that society.

Jack Barnes has been politically active since the early 1960s and in this work he presents a summary of his and his comrades’ experiences. As national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, Barnes has endeavored from the early 1970s to build communist parties in the U.S. and other countries.

As explained in the introduction, The Changing Face of U.S. Politics “is a handbook for the generations of workers coming into factories, mines, and mills in the last half of the 1990s, workers who will react to the increasingly uncertain life, ceaseless turmoil, and brutality that will accompany the arrival of the twenty-first century.”

In other words, the book is a guide for the workers in their millions whose intensifying resistance to these ever-deteriorating conditions will raise their class consciousness and, before they are finished, will revolutionize the unions and all of society.

This new edition of the book is a guide for young people who are increasingly discontented with the racism, inequality of women, and other social ills — which, as a result of capitalist exploitation and oppression on a world scale, continually reproduce themselves and weigh heavily on them.

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions, written on the basis of working-class experiences in the last 20 years,



Iran Book News Agency ran online review, above, of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*, translated into Farsi by Talaye Porsoo from the original English by Pathfinder Press. IBNA later ran short excerpt. Book is available from Pathfinder in English, Farsi, French, Greek, Spanish and Swedish. See special offer on page 3.

reflects the hard-won lessons of that section of the working class that is disciplined, conscious, and revolutionary.

The most important point the book poses is why it is the working class — who own no major instruments of production — who can inspire their allies and lead humanity out of the crises endemic to capitalism.

The pages of this book contain explanations for the changing face of U.S. politics, which concretely began early in the 1970s following a long period of economic growth after the Second World War. The author reminds us that the collapse of the New York Stock Market on Oct. 19, 1987, signaled the accelerating rate of decline of capitalism — a fall that literally became global overnight.

The capitalists unleash an unrelenting war, at times open at times hidden, against the health, safety, unionization, and human spirit of the working class. The bosses are constantly pressing to lower wages and benefits.

The collected knowledge in this book may be considered a short prologue to an objective study of strategic and tactical tasks that have fallen on the shoulders of the labor unions.

The fact that the book has been translated into French, Greek, Spanish, and Swedish shows the author’s ability, because of his concrete experiences, to

provide a multidimensional, comprehensive, and above all a reflective analysis of unfolding events inside America that is interacting with the trends of modern times.

Barnes has been active for more than half a century in organizing and leading political efforts in defense of the socialist revolution in Cuba. In 1965 he was elected the national chairperson of the Young Socialist Alliance, and at the same time he undertook responsibility to guide the Young Socialist Alliance and the Socialist Workers Party in activities in the widening anti-Vietnam War movement in the U.S. and internationally.

Barnes has been a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party since 1963 and since 1969 has been a national officer of the party. He is a contributing editor of *New International* magazine.

The translator — through her accurate comprehension of the text and by choosing to use uncomplicated words — has succeeded in conveying the concepts of the book to the readers. In lucid language, she has related the story of workers revolution.

Talaye Porsoo Publications has published *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* in a run of 1,000 copies, 233 pages, 9,000 toman [3\$].

## THE MILITANT

### Defending workers rights from Korea to US

From Korea to Syria to the United States, the ‘Militant’ covers and backs the struggles of working people to defend rights to free speech and association — political conquests that make it easier for workers to organize and fight for their interests. Don’t miss a single issue!



AP/Lee Jin-man

Leaders of Unified Progressive Party, which Korean president seeks to ban, surrounded by cops at parliament in Seoul, Sept. 4.

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Submissions to the *Militant* may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant’s* views. These are expressed in editorials.



# Subscription campaign

## Continued from front page

tions that way. The other thing we have done is add a couple hours to the time we go out to sell the paper each week.”

Supporters of the *Militant* in Philadelphia — who are in the bold near the top of the chart — decided to raise their goal from 130 to 135, setting an example for other areas in a position to do the same.

This last week supporters of the *Militant* sold 360 subscriptions, the best so far. With this effort, we have started closing the gap toward the international goal of 2,500 as supporters in every local area are mapping out a plan to go over their quota.

Among the 360 were four workers behind bars, which puts the prisoners’ column at 80 percent, poised to blast over the goal of 15.

“I am a proud worker who stands in solidarity with your socialist creed,” wrote an inmate in California who signed up for six months. “I recently came across your informative paper here in the hole being circulated among inmates. I don’t know who gets the paper, but I am thankful it and other issues are being passed my way.”

Communist workers John Benson and Susan LaMont traveled to Memphis, Tenn., Nov. 14-15, to walk the picket line with members of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 252G locked out by Kellogg.

“Many were familiar with the 20-month lockout of workers at American Crystal Sugar,” in the Upper Midwest, which ended earlier this year, LaMont told the *Militant*. “Local 252G President Kevin Bradshaw welcomed us to the picket line and encouraged us

to speak to everyone there.”

“The only way forward for all workers, union and nonunion, is to get together and fight,” said Rev. Ronald Cottie, one of eight members of 252G who signed up for a subscription. “Regardless of where working people are from or whatever country they live in, they should be treated the same.”

In Seattle, *Militant* supporters joined some 250 workers at a rally of Machinists and others Nov. 18, after members of the union at Boeing rejected a concession contract in a 2-1 vote the week before.

Patrick Mick, 33, a member of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 19 in Seattle, was one of four participants who signed up to receive the paper in the mail. He also bought a copy of *Teamster Rebellion*. “I’m starting to see what is happening to the workers,” Mick told *Militant* supporter John Naubert. “The unions before me have fought for us. I want to educate myself and then help educate others about this situation.”

*Militant* supporters in Houston took a goal of selling 50 subscriptions over two weeks and got 20 in the first, almost double what they have made in any single week before, reported Cindy Jaquith.

“A woman whose brother was killed in a U.S. jail was struck by the article on deaths in police custody in the U.K.,” said Jaquith. “She said come back Sunday after 10 a.m. We were there on time and she had her \$5 ready. Another callback got a subscription and a copy of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*,” one of nine Pathfinder books on special with a subscription (see ad on this page).



Militant/Eric Simpson

Above, Betsey Stone, right, sells subscription to Luz Hernandez, left, and her family in Santa Rosa, Calif., Nov. 3. Inset, Trence Jackson, right, signs up when Susan LaMont visits BCTGM picket line outside Kellogg’s Memphis, Tenn., plant, Nov. 14.



Militant/John Benson

Supporters in New York have sold 70 copies of the specials since the drive started, the majority in the last few weeks of stepped-up campaigning. Best sellers are *The Cuban Five*, *Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free* with 18 copies and 12 each of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism*.

“We had our best week so far and narrowed the gap,” reported Seth Galinsky. “We’ve organized weekday evening teams Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and full-day teams on Saturday and Sunday. We mapped out plans for the remaining three weeks of the drive, keeping up the same pace to come out ahead at the end.”

The vast majority of the subscriptions in New York have been sold going door to door, more than 30 in the Rockaways

neighborhood in Queens, one of the areas hardest hit by Hurricane Sandy last year.

Ögmundur Jónsson reported that supporters campaigned in Dagenham, East London, over the weekend and signed up 24 people for subscriptions. Among them was Tiffany Atendido, a nurse who is originally from the Philippines. “The government told people to evacuate,” she said, “but many are afraid to leave their properties. You know, the Philippines has 20 storms a year. If leaders had prepared beforehand, people could have been ready for the big one.”

Montreal is another area that had its best week so far. Calling back to a person who had bought a single issue, they were told about a four-day conference of the Quebec Federation of Women, Katy LeRougetel reported.

“We decided to attend, participated in workshop discussions, plenary sessions and informal exchanges for the entire time,” she wrote. “More than 700 women were there, eight bought subscriptions and six of them also got one of the books on special, including copies of *Women in Cuba: The Making a Revolution Within the Revolution* both in Spanish and English and five titles in French.”

## Special offers with ‘Militant’ subscription

### The Cuban Five

Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free  
**from pages of the ‘Militant’**  
\$3 with subscription (regular \$5)

### The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions  
**by Jack Barnes**  
\$10 with subscription (regular \$24)

### The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning

The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism  
**by Jack Barnes**  
\$2 with subscription (regular \$3)

### We Are Heirs of the World’s Revolutions

**by Thomas Sankara**  
Speeches from the Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87  
\$5 with subscription (regular \$10)

### Thomas Sankara Speaks

The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-1987  
\$10 with subscription (regular \$24)

**See distributors on page 8**

### Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power

**by Jack Barnes**  
\$10 with subscription (regular \$20)

### Cuba and Angola

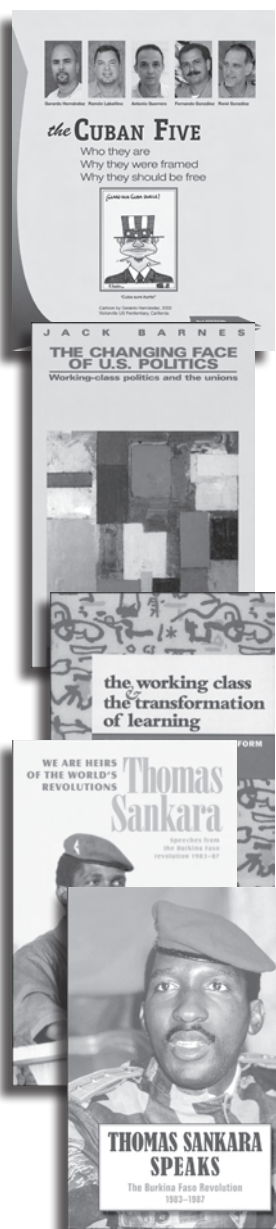
Fighting for Africa’s Freedom and Our Own  
**by Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro; Cuban generals and combatants; Gabriel García Márquez**  
\$6 with subscription (regular \$12)

### Women in Cuba

The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution  
**by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer**  
\$10 with subscription (regular \$20)

### Women and Revolution

The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution  
**by Asela de los Santos, Mary-Alice Waters and others**  
\$3 with subscription (regular \$7)



## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### CALIFORNIA

**San Francisco**  
Philippines Social Disaster Wrought by Capitalism. Speaker: Eric Simpson, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Nov. 30, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

### GEORGIA

**Atlanta**  
Women’s Right to Abortion: A Fight for Workers Worldwide. Speaker: Susan LaMont, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m. 777 Cleveland Ave., Suite 103. Tel.: (678) 528-7828.

### ILLINOIS

**Chicago**  
Philippines Social Disaster Wrought by Capitalism. Fri., Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m. 806 W. Washington Blvd., Room 202. Tel.: (312) 455-0111.

### NEW ZEALAND

**Auckland**  
The Asset Sales Referendum: What Stance for Working People? Speaker: Patrick Brown, Communist League. Fri., Nov. 29, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5 waged, \$2 unwaged. 4/125 Grafton Road. Tel: (09) 369-1223.



# Kurds defend lands in Syria

**Continued from front page**  
in Syria, the largest concentration resides in Hasakah province, which is 70 percent Kurdish. The other major concentration is in the district of Efrin in the northwest, where their numbers have doubled over the course of the civil war. These areas are commonly referred to by Kurds as Rojava (western Kurdistan). Kurds also comprise a significant minority in both Damascus and Aleppo.

Hasakah is strategically important, containing the majority of the country's oil resources and functioning as the agricultural heartland. With the capture of Ras al-Ain on the Turkish border and Yarubiya on the Iraqi border, the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and its military wing, the Committees for the Protection of the Kurdish People (YPG), now control most of Syria's oil resources and its means of export.

The Democratic Union Party was forged out of an alliance with the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) in Turkey. Between 1980 and 2012, some 5,000 Syrian Kurds were killed fighting with the PKK against the Turkish government. Today, the Committees for the Protection of the Kurdish People in Syria number more than 15,000, nearly 10 percent of them women.

Since 2011 a three-front war is being fought in Syria, where workers, farmers and their allies are pressing for greater democratic and political rights against the Bashar al-Assad government.

At the center of the war is the grinding conflict by rebel groups under the banner of the Free Syrian Army against the weakened Syrian military, which has been propped up by local pro-government paramilitaries and Hezbollah forces sent from Lebanon and backed by Tehran. Recently pro-Assad forces made gains, with a ground offensive in the suburbs of Damascus and Aleppo that followed a campaign of air and artillery bombardments and sieges aimed at starving the population.

The second front is being fought by reactionary al-Qaedaist Islamist groups — primarily the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and the al-Nusra Front — seeking to wrest territory and control over resources amid the fray, particu-

larly in areas under sway of rebel groups and Kurdish militias. While they have gained ground in some regions against the former, battles against the Kurds have been largely unsuccessful.

The third is the Kurdish fight for control of the regions where they predominate, which has made steady progress.

The Kurds were oppressed under the six-century reign of the Ottoman empire and have faced more of the same since that empire fell at the end of the first World War. At that time, victorious powers of London and Paris carved the region into what are now Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Israel — consciously dividing the Kurds within imperialist-drawn borders and denying them a homeland. The capitalist rulers of Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria maintained the second-class status of the Kurds after the end of colonial rule in the Middle East following World War II.

### History of Kurds in Syria

In 1962, the Syrian military regime stripped 120,000 Kurds of Syrian citizenship, declaring them “foreigners living in the country.” They and their descendants were forced to carry red ID cards identifying them as foreigners, without the right to own land. Use of the Kurdish language was restricted.

In 1963 the Baath party came to power, declaring Syria “an Arab country,” and defining Kurds as “refugees displaced from Turkey.” After Hafiz al-Assad came to power in 1970, the regime began a policy, which continued under the rule of his son and current president Bashar al-Assad, providing incentives and special privileges for Arabs to move to Hasakah province in an effort to weaken Kurdish influence.

The biggest shift in favor of the Kurdish struggle for national sovereignty came as an unintended consequence of the U.S.-led overthrow of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Iraqi Kurds took advantage of that conflict to carve out an autonomous region there under the Kurdish Regional Government.

These developments inspired Kurdish fighters throughout the region. In 2004, dozens of Kurds were killed by Syrian government forces in the suppression



Reuters

**Kurds celebrating liberation of area around Ras al-Ain in Hasakah province after capturing it from Islamist forces Nov. 6. Kurds have gained control over majority of province.**

of an uprising in Qamishli, a city on the Turkish border in Hasakah province.

When protests against Assad swept across the country in 2011, Kurdish youth joined in. PYD cadres who had been driven out of the country by Assad's repression and were encamped with Turkish PKK fighters, returned to Syria. They largely stood aloof from the unfolding protests. But these developments opened the door to a new rise of Kurdish national struggles.

“It is our right to self-determination in the Kurdish areas,” Redur Xelil, PYD spokesman, said in a Nov. 11 Reuters article. “We're not asking for separation, simply the right to manage our affairs.”

“The Kurds in Rojava will continue with the autonomous governance until a

new Syria emerges. In that new Syria, Kurds want to be recognized and accepted,” Kurdish journalist Amed Dicle wrote in Jadaliyya, an online magazine of the Arab Studies Institute based in Washington and Beirut. “If in this new Syria a regime happens to emerge that denies the Kurds their dignity and rights in Syria, such as Al-Nusra or the current regime, Kurds will enter a new period of struggle.”

On Nov. 7 thousands of Kurds in Turkey demonstrated waving the Kurdish national flag near Nusaybin on the Syrian border where the Turkish government is building a wall to separate the two Kurdish communities. Turkish forces dispersed them with tear gas.

## ‘Arrest cop who shot 13-year-old’

**Continued from front page**  
lence,” Cazares said. “A good kid who was studying music. And with only one bullet [Gelhaus] killed him. Then he shot seven more times.”

In the weeks since the killing no criminal charges have been filed against Gelhaus, who is suspended with pay.

López's parents, Rodrigo López and Sujei Cruz, have filed a federal civil rights suit for damages against Sonoma County and Gelhaus.

Three seconds passed between the time Andy López was accosted by officers and when he was shot, according to the suit. After López was struck down by the first bullet Gelhaus continued to fire, an eyewitness says. According to a police autopsy report, Andy López was hit by seven bullets.

A series of protest actions — including vigils at the site of the shooting, walkouts by high school and middle school students, and evening marches — have put police and politicians on the defensive in this town of 170,000 people.

Some 1,000 students rallied Oct. 29 outside the sheriff's office, despite warnings from school administrators. “This officer should be prosecuted for murder,” attorney John Burris told the rally. He represents the family of Oscar Grant who was killed on a train platform in 2009 by transit police in Oakland.

On Oct. 30, an evening protest march calling for justice for Andy López drew 1,500 participants from all generations, many carrying signs calling for the arrest and prosecution of Gelhaus.

“The people of this community are standing together,” Raquel Morales, 37, told the *Militant*. “At the beginning they

were trying to make it seem that it was just an issue for the Hispanic community, but Andy was one child too many.”

School bus driver Ramon Martinez said he has seen how the killing has affected students. One of his passengers, aged 13, told him she wanted to come to the protest, but couldn't. “Please go for me,” she asked him. Martinez came with his wife Audelia, bringing flowers for Andy's parents.

The Sheriff's Department says Gelhaus acted in fear of his life because he mistook López's Airsoft gun, which shoots rubber pellets and sells for about \$30 retail, for a real AK-47.

Brian Bushon, 40, a delivery driver, told the crowd at the Nov. 9 rally that he found a bullet in his driveway nine doors down from where López was shot. He heard the shots shortly after returning from walking around the block with his 16-month-old son. “Just moments after we got into our house this officer unloaded his clip,” he said. “The sheriff asks, ‘What if it had been a real AK47?’ But I can play the ‘what if’ game myself. What if I had been slower getting home?”

Another neighbor, who declined to give his name to the press, said he found bullets from the sheriff's gun lodged in his kitchen cabinet and garage when he came home the evening of the shooting.

“Andy López wasn't killed, he was murdered,” said Liz Henning-Adam who drove up to the rally from Sacramento with her husband Everett. She spoke about the death of her son Bobby Henning, 22, in February 2012. He was shot by Los Angeles cops when his car broke down and a passing driver called the police to help him.





## ON THE PICKET LINE

### Boston school bus drivers protest firings of union leaders

BOSTON — More than 250 bus drivers and their supporters marched and rallied here Nov. 9 to protest the firing of four leaders of their union, United Steelworkers Local 8751, for their involvement in a job action on the morning of Oct. 8. Drivers refused to work until Veolia Transportation management would discuss their grievances over “chronic payroll shortages, overcrowded and badly timed routes,” and “a general refusal to abide by the terms and conditions of the contract,” said a United Steelworkers flyer.

Instead of meeting, the union says, Veolia Transportation officials initiated a lockout at 11 a.m. that day, shutting down bus service for 30,000 Boston public school students. Bosses also fired four union officers — Grievance Committee Chairperson Stevan Kirschbaum, Vice President Steve Gillis, Recording Secretary Andre Francois and steward and former Local President Garry Murchison. Driver Richard Lynch was temporarily suspended, and the company sent a letter of reprimand to hundreds of drivers who did not report to the dispatch window Oct. 8.

“They’re out to bust the union,” Murchison told the *Militant*, noting that contract negotiations begin next year.

“You were with us in our fight with Verizon, so we are here to let you know we are with you,” Julio Delacruz, a shop steward in International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 2222, told the rally in front of the company’s offices.

About 30 members of Amalgamated Transportation Union Local 1181 came to the rally from New York. “We went through the same thing,” Local 1181 member Maria Gentile, told the rally, referring to a one-month strike by bus drivers and matrons in New York at the beginning of the year. Bus drivers from Brockton, Mass., also participated in the rally.

“We had to make the company hear us,” bus driver Peter Lopes told the *Militant* at the Nov. 9 rally.

—Ted Leonard

### ILWU protests lockout by grain shippers at two Northwest ports

VANCOUVER, Wash. — More than 200 members and supporters of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union demonstrated Nov. 4 at Esther Short Park against ongoing lockouts. ILWU Local 4 here has been locked out by United Grain Corporation since February and Local 8 in Portland, Ore., by Columbia Grain Corporation since May.

Other unions represented at the rally included members of ILWU Local 21 from Longview, Teamsters, United Food and Commercial Workers, Portland Association of Educators, International Union of Painters and the Inlandboatmen’s Union, a division of the ILWU.

In September, the Clark County prosecutor decided not to file charges against Todd Walker a member of ILWU Local 4 who was accused of sabotaging the United Grain facility here in December 2012.

Negotiations between the ILWU and the grain companies have resumed, though neither side is giving any details on the talks.

ILWU members have gone to eastern Washington and Montana to talk to grain farmers about the dispute, according to the *Capital Press*.

In another development, a federal

judge found the ILWU in civil contempt of court for ignoring an order to stop waterborne picketing at grain barges along the Columbia River, according to the *Journal of Commerce*.

—Edwin Fruit

### Quebec bookstore workers strike for guaranteed work hours

MONTREAL — More than 250 workers at 11 of Renaud-Bray’s 31 bookstores across Quebec went on strike Nov. 2 to demand higher wages, a guaranteed minimum of 24 hours work a week, and greater say in work schedules. The company has the largest network of French-language bookstores in North America.

The strikers, members of the Office and Professional Employees Union, have been without a contract since Dec. 31 last year.

Renaud-Bray wants part-time workers to be “on-call,” creating competition among employees for available work.

On the picket line at the chain’s Fleury Road bookstore Nov. 9, a young worker told the *Militant* that at times she hasn’t been called into work for a week and



Militant/Ted Leonard

School bus drivers in Boston Nov. 9 protest firing of four union leaders and refusal of Veolia Transportation bosses to discuss grievances over pay shortages and other contract violations.

then asked to work 35 hours the following week.

University of Montreal students joined the Cote des Neiges store picket line Nov. 4. A flyer strikers distributed to passersby states that workers start out at Can\$10.39 an hour and top out at Can\$12.78 after eight years

(Can\$1=US95 cents). The legal minimum in Quebec is Can\$10.15. Workers are demanding a 3 percent raise.

Renaud-Bray said the company offers “working conditions higher than the market,” according to CBC News.

—Felix Vincent Ardea and Annette Kouri

## Anti-immigrant ordinance debated in Nebraska town

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

FREMONT, Neb. — More than 100 people crowded into the City Council chambers here Nov. 12 to express their opinions on an anti-immigrant ordinance passed in a 2010 referendum that prohibits “harboring illegal aliens” and forces all employers to use the government’s E-Verify system to check the immigration status of job applicants.

The mandatory E-Verify checks have been implemented in this town of 26,000 some 30 miles northwest of Omaha. But the part of the law that requires renters to prove their legal status and obtain a police permit was suspended pending a court challenge.

Similar housing ordinances in Farmers Branch, Texas, and Hazleton, Pa., have been struck down by the courts in recent years. But on Oct. 24 of this year, the Eight Circuit Court of Appeals

upheld the law here. At the Nov. 12 City Council meeting, however, legislators voted to hold another referendum Feb. 11 to decide whether to repeal it.

“This ordinance has got to go,” resident Don Bowen told the council. “I rent an apartment here. It isn’t just about immigrants. It even makes me a second-class citizen.”

“We, the people, have spoken. You have no right to change this,” said resident John Wiegert, who campaigned for the discriminatory bill.

High school student Jose Rodriguez spoke for repeal and against “a system where Latino immigrants are perpetual foreigners.” But, he said, “everyone should know by now we are here to stay.”

“This law is an attack, not only against working people who have immigrated here, but against all workers,”

said Rebecca Williamson, of the Socialist Workers Party. “I worked for more than eight years in meatpacking plants where bosses try to pit us against each other and convince those of us who are native-born that immigrants are the source of our problems. But it’s the employers who use discrimination and the second-class status of fellow workers to go after our unions and push down wages and working conditions of us all.”

“It isn’t just about housing,” Jennifer Lopez, a high school student who came to the meeting, told the *Militant*. “I have been stopped by the police while driving in town. Stopped for no reason and asked for my identification. So has my boyfriend, and my brother. Just because we have brown skin.”

“We have to stand up for our rights,” she said.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



December 2, 1988

On Nov. 8, referenda banning, or upholding a ban, on the use of state funds to pay for abortions passed in Michigan, Colorado and Arkansas.

The antiabortion campaign can only be taken on by mobilizing the reservoir of support that exists for abortion rights among millions of working people. As part of this, a serious effort is needed to politically respond to the flood of propaganda churned out for years by antiabortion groups, church hierarchies, Democratic and Republican politicians, and the government.

The only way to defend the right to abortion and win over those who have been confused is on the basis that abortion is every woman’s right to choose, regardless of age, income, or marital status.

All working people — men, as well as women — have an enormous stake in defending this right, and reconquering the ground that has been lost.



December 2, 1963

Immediately after news of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was flashed over radio and television on Nov. 22, Farrell Dobbs, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, issued a statement. The full text follows:

“The Socialist Workers Party condemns the brutal assassination of President Kennedy as an inhuman, anti-social and criminal act. We extend our deepest sympathy to Mrs. Kennedy and the children in their personal grief.

“The act springs from the atmosphere created by the inflammatory agitation and deeds of the racists and ultra-conservative forces. Political terrorism, like suppression of political freedom, violates the democratic rights of all Americans and can only strengthen the forces of reaction. Political differences within our society must be settled in an orderly manner by majority decision after free and open public debate in which all points of view are heard.”



December 3, 1938

Handicapped by a half-hearted and treacherous leadership, 2,000,000 French workers last Wednesday demonstrated their readiness to fight the advancing menace of Fascism.

Under the direct threat of powerful repressive forces mobilized by Bonaparte Daladier, the general strike, tardily called and ham-strung by the leaders who tried to keep it from developing into a struggle for power, was limited in its effectiveness.

Daladier deliberately set out to crush the resistance of the workers to his program of misery and starvation. Because the trade union bureaucrats, the Socialist and Stalinist leaders refused to meet the issue of political power, Daladier was permitted to score a bloodless victory for the advancing cause of Fascist reaction.

Daladier openly challenged the workers precisely on the issue of political power.



# Bangladesh garment workers fight for higher wages, safety

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Tens of thousands of garment workers in Bangladesh have taken to the streets in the last few weeks after a government proposal for a raise in the minimum wage fell far short of their demand. Hundreds of factories have been closed down.

The most recent wave of protest strikes follows a series of mobilizations pressing for higher wages, safer workplaces and union recognition over the past half year, including a six-day strike in September that shut down some 20 percent of the country's 3,200 garment factories and a demonstration of 50,000 workers in the capital Dhaka Sept. 21.

A government-appointed wage board recommended Nov. 4 that the new monthly minimum wage be set at 5,300 taka (\$68), a 77 percent increase from today's 3,000 taka. The board consists of government officials, garment manufacturers and Sirajul Islam Rony, president of the National Garment Workers Employees League, one of dozens of labor federations in the country.

"Our demand has been 8,000 taka [\$101], 45 union federations jointly took the position that 5,300 taka is not acceptable," Amirul Haque Amin, president of the National Garment Workers Federation, said in a phone interview from Dhaka Nov. 11. "We are in broad agreement on this, but we were not represented on the board."

Representatives from the Garment Manufacturers Association objected to the proposal of 5,300 taka, saying they can't do more than 4,500 (\$57).

"They demand that the government set 4,500 taka as the minimum wage within 15 days," Amin said. "If not, they say they cannot run their business and they will turn the keys over to the gov-

ernment and make it responsible for the bank loans they have."

A new minimum wage has to be approved by the Labor Ministry before taking effect. The 45 federations jointly organized a press conference to make their opposition public.

The day after the proposal of 5,300 taka became known, workers in Gazipur, north of Dhaka, staged protest demonstrations, halting production in at least 65 plants. Some 20 workers were injured in clashes with cops.

"Workers are impatient and angry," Amin said. "Things are going on all the time. Actions of different kinds will continue, because workers can't live on these wages. Rents are going up and prices are rising for food and transport."

On Nov. 11, workers shut down production in more than 100 plants in Ashulia. The following day the protests spread to Savar, shutting down an additional 100 plants. These two industrial belts in the northern outskirts of Dhaka have 350 garment factories. More than 30,000 workers took to the streets to press the demand for 8,000 taka.

Cops fired rubber bullets, water cannons and tear gas in their attempts to break up the demonstrations. The gov-



Reuters/Andrew Biraj



Tens of thousands of garment workers in Bangladesh protested in recent weeks demanding minimum wage be raised to \$101 a month. They've rejected government-appointed wage board's proposal for 77 percent increase to \$68. At least 45 organizations of garment workers held protests in Dhaka Nov. 8, including rally above. Inset, march in Narayanganj, near capital Sept. 25.

ernment deployed hundreds of paramilitary border guards to assist the cops. Angry workers hurled stones at the police forces and at least 80 workers were injured over the two days of protests, Industrial Police Director Mustafizur Rahman told the press. The 2,900 strong Industrial Police Force was set up in 2010, in the midst of monthslong demonstrations that forced the government to raise the minimum wage to 3,000 taka from 1,662.

The garment sector accounts for 80

percent of Bangladesh's exports and employs 4 million workers, mostly women. Wages are the lowest of all major garment producers and hundreds have been killed over the past couple years as a result of building collapses, fires and other dangerous conditions imposed by bosses cutting every corner and squeezing every ounce of profit they can. These conditions have engendered stepped-up attempts to organize unions, which have been met with fierce resistance from the bosses and their government.

## Philippine typhoon: thousands killed, aid scarce

**Continued from front page**  
the market relations on the land that determine that a growing multitude of workers, farmers and fishermen live in "affordable" low-lying flood-prone

regions — more than 60 percent of the country's population lives in the coastal zone. And the same social relations ensure that rather than living in homes constructed for the inevitable storms, these working people reside in the most flimsy housing. Even the schools and other buildings designated as disaster shelters were too shoddy to offer sufficient protection.

According to Philippine government figures as of Nov. 17 nearly 4,000 people died, 1,186 are missing and more than 12,000 injured during the storm and its aftermath.

According to the U.N. Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2.5 million people need food assistance, but only 375,000 have gotten any help; 248,176 homes were destroyed and 246,435 damaged; and nearly 2 million are homeless.

Ten days after the typhoon, bodies still littered the streets in Tacloban, the center of the relief effort.

Philippine Interior Secretary Max Roxas told reporters that Tacloban, on Leyte Island, had only eight working trucks. Tons of food, water and medicine have piled up, but without transport or organization, much has yet to be distributed. The national government declared martial law there, imposing an 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew and sending some 2,000 police and soldiers, whose primary function is protection of property.

Tim Shenk, press officer for Doctors Without Borders, told the *Militant* from New York Nov. 19 that the 160 personnel the organization has sent to the disaster areas are "not close to meet-

ing the needs." He called it "a logistical nightmare," adding "many roads remain blocked and damaged, and fuel and vehicles are in short supply."

The group's emergency coordinator, Natasha Reyes, reported the same day that their medical teams are worried that the lack of clean water and adequate shelter could cause an outbreak of deadly diseases such as typhoid, cholera, and leptospirosis.

### No evacuation organized

The government was aware of the impending typhoon days in advance. "This one will be dangerous," the Puerto Galera Yacht Club in the Philippines said in a message it sent out based on information from the Joint Typhoon Warning Center almost four days before the storm hit. "Be warned!"

But it wasn't until two days later that the government says it began to broadcast warnings and told people they should leave danger zones, without offering any means to transport families and their belongings or anywhere safe to go.

"Some of the people went to the school because it was supposed to be a safe place," schoolteacher Cirila Codilla told the *Militant* by phone from Ormoc City on Leyte Island's west side Nov. 18. "But much of it was destroyed. Now there are people living in the portions of the school that were not destroyed."

"The wind took away the roof of our home. We don't have light, we don't have water, sometimes we don't have food to eat," she said. Her family charges up their cellphone at a gen-

**Continued on page 9**

## New contributors, increased goals boost SWP Party-Building Fund

BY TONY LANE

A total of \$14,788 was collected in the best week to date for the \$100,000 SWP Party-Building Fund. Two areas, Chicago and Des Moines, increased their quotas.

New contributors are being won among new and renewing *Militant* subscribers, who are signing up to receive the socialist paper as part of an international effort to expand its readership.

"We had a table up with the *Militant*, Pathfinder books and a bucket asking for contributions to the SWP fund during the longshore workers roll call outside the union hiring hall in Fort Lauderdale," reported Anthony Dutrow from Miami. "Long-time subscriber Alice Bynes dropped \$10 in the bucket with a smile on her face as she hurried to get to the berth for her assignment." Three other longshore workers donated the following week, said Dutrow.

James Alexander in Chicago is another new contributor. He mailed in a one-year renewal after signing up for a three-month introductory subscription last fall. "I read about the fund in the *Militant*," Alexander said. "So when someone called about it, I was glad to help out."

Send contributions to the SWP office nearest you (see directory on page 8) or directly to the SWP National Office at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

| Party-Building Fund<br>Week 4 of 9 |           |           |     |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----|
| Area                               | Quota     | Collected | %   |
| San Francisco                      | \$13,000  | \$7,204   | 55% |
| Lincoln                            | \$200     | \$100     | 50% |
| Boston                             | \$3,500   | \$1,665   | 48% |
| Los Angeles                        | \$8,200   | \$3,732   | 46% |
| New York                           | \$20,000  | \$8,587   | 43% |
| Twin Cities                        | \$5,750   | \$2,394   | 42% |
| Des Moines*                        | \$3,000   | \$1,231   | 41% |
| Philadelphia                       | \$4,200   | \$1,282   | 31% |
| Washington, DC                     | \$7,500   | \$2,135   | 28% |
| Atlanta                            | \$8,800   | \$2,395   | 27% |
| Seattle                            | \$8,800   | \$1,825   | 21% |
| Chicago*                           | \$10,000  | \$1,981   | 20% |
| Omaha                              | \$2,500   | \$432     | 17% |
| Miami                              | \$3,000   | \$478     | 16% |
| Houston                            | \$3,000   | \$46      | 2%  |
| Other                              |           | \$1,250   |     |
| Total                              | \$101,450 | \$36,737  | 37% |
| Should Be                          | \$100,000 | \$44,444  | 44% |
| * raised goal                      |           |           |     |



# Cartoon exhibit in Albany, NY, gains support for Cuban Five

**BY MINDY BRUDNO**  
ALBANY, N.Y. — “Humor From My Pen,” an exhibit of cartoons by Gerardo Hernández, one of the Cuban Five, was shown here Oct. 10-24 at the First Unitarian Universalist Society.

It was viewed by more than 100 members of the congregation, as well as members of other churches, community organizations and others who use the building’s facilities.

Among those who came to see the exhibit were a dozen students from the State University of New York at Albany, who attend a public speaking class held at the Universalist Society facilities, where they heard a five-minute presentation about the exhibit and the international campaign to free the Five.

Shown along with the cartoons during the two-week exhibit were videos by actor Danny Glover and Dolores Huerta, a founder of the United Farm Workers union, that presented facts about the frame-up of the five Cuban revolutionaries by the U.S. government.

Glover described the bombings and other attacks carried out by the Cuban-American rightist forces the Five were monitoring in the U.S.

A Jan. 20 statement by Hernández that was enlarged by local Democratic Party political activist Fredda Peritz was prominently featured on the wall. “Someone once said that ‘humor liberates’ (and if nobody did say that, I will say it now),” Hernández wrote. “For me it is something that ‘gets us out’ for at least a few moments from behind the walls where we have been unjustly imprisoned for almost 15 years.”

“This exhibit shows that the prison system has not been able to strip Gerardo of his sense of humor or his humanity,” said Mabel Leon of Pastors for Peace at an Oct. 24 program attended by 35 people.

This was the first event ever held in the Albany area for the Cuban Five. In the course of publicizing it,

many organizations heard a summary of the facts in the case by local activists, and hundreds of flyers with information about the Five and the exhibit were distributed. The Oct. 24 program was co-sponsored by the Social Responsibilities Council of the Unitarian Universalist Society, Bethlehem Neighbors for Peace, the Solidarity Committee of the Capital Region and Pastors for Peace. The groups publicized the exhibit through their newsletters, email lists and websites.

SALAM Project (Support and Legal Advocacy for Muslims) brought a large display to the meeting highlighting Muslims who have been framed up by the police in recent years.

The group’s organizer, Lynne Jackson, had been unfamiliar with the case of the Cuban Five until she received a leaflet about the meeting at a picket line demanding release of political prisoner Lynne Stewart, 74, a lawyer who was framed up and given a 10-year prison term for “conspiracy to provide material support to a terrorist activity.” The frame-up stemmed from her legal defense of Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman, a Muslim cleric convicted in 1995 of “seditious conspiracy” for alleged links to a plot to bomb targets in New York.

The main speaker at the event was Pepe Rossy, who described how Carlos Muñoz Varela — a friend and fellow fighter for Puerto Rican independence and supporter of the Cuban Revolution — was gunned down by Cuban rightists in Puerto Rico in 1979.

Earlier in the day, Rossy and other supporters of the Five brought some of Hernández’s cartoons and spoke at a meeting of a half-dozen students and some faculty members on the University of Albany main campus about the fight to free the Five. The meeting was sponsored by the Department of Latin American, Caribbean and U.S. Latino Studies.

## Cuba hosts int’l conference to free Cuban Five



top, Militant/Jacob Perasso; bottom, Amauris Betancourt,

HOLGUÍN, Cuba — Family members of the Cuban Five political prisoners and René González address participants in Ninth Colloquium for the Freedom of the Cuban Five here Nov. 13. From left, Isabel Hernández, sister of Gerardo Hernández; Olga Salanueva, wife of René González; René González; Magali Lloret, mother of Fernando González; Irma Schwerert, mother of René González; Mirta Rodríguez, mother of Antonio Guerrero; Laura Labañino, daughter of Ramón Labañino; Iraidita Yadirá (speaking), niece of Gerardo; Irmita González, daughter of René and Olga; Aili Labañino, daughter of Ramón.

Below, René González addresses rally of more than 10,000 here Nov. 16 during his first visit to the city.

González, the first of the Cuban Five to return to Cuba, took part in a range of activities throughout the four-day colloquium, where some 270 delegates from 52 countries discussed international collaboration in the work to win freedom for the remaining four prisoners.

— JACOB PERASSO



“We know that right is on our side, but to win we need a jury of millions throughout the world to make our truth known”

— Gerardo Hernández

**See special offer on page 3**



Cartoon by Gerardo Hernández drawn in 2012 at time that Cuban government was drilling for oil off its shores, a project that ended unsuccessfully. Cartoon reads: “The ‘oil’ we most need to find ... Efficiency, Productivity, Organization; Quality, Discipline, Responsibility; Thrift, Perseverance, Rigor.” Happy 54th anniversary brothers and sisters!”

### Who are the Cuban Five?



Fernando González, Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino and René González are Cuban revolutionaries who during the 1990s accepted assignments from the Cuban government to gather information on the operations and plans of Cuban-American paramilitary groups based in southern Florida. These rightist outfits, organizing on U.S. soil with virtual impunity, have a long record of carrying out bombings, assassinations and other deadly attacks, both against targets in Cuba and supporters of the Cuban Revolution in the United States, Puerto Rico and elsewhere.

On Sept. 12, 1998, the five were arrested by the FBI. They were framed up and convicted on a variety of charges, which included acting as unregistered agents of the Cuban government and possession of false identity documents. Without a shred of evidence, three were charged with “conspiracy to gather and transmit national defense information.”

Hernández was also convicted of conspiracy to commit murder, based on the pretext that he bore responsibility for the Cuban government’s 1996 shoot-down of two Brothers to the Rescue aircraft that had invaded Cuban airspace in disregard of Havana’s repeated warnings. He is serving two life terms plus 15 years. His wife Adriana Pérez is barred from entering the United States.

All but René González remain in prison. He was allowed to return to Cuba in May this year, halfway through a three-year term of supervised release.



# Expansion of culture, learning at center of Cuban Revolution

*Below is an excerpt from Aldabonazo: Inside the Cuban Revolutionary Underground 1952-58, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for December. Author Armando Hart, one of the historic leaders of the Cuban Revolution, gives his account of the victorious struggle to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. This piece describes Hart's experience after the Jan. 1, 1959, triumph of the revolution, when he took on the responsibility of minister of education. Copyright © 2004 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY ARMANDO HART

The Cuban Revolution triumphed on the threshold of the 1960s, in a country then subjugated to U.S. neocolonialism, in a world divided into spheres of influence by the victors of World War II. It emerged victorious in the peculiar framework of the ideological, cultural, and political conflict between the socialist ideal and the world capitalist system, and in the midst of the accentuated anticommunist campaign of the first fifteen years of the Cold War. In contrast to that international panorama, a popular expression was heard all over the country: “*Si Fidel es comunista, que me pongan en la lista.*” [If Fidel is a communist, then put me on the list.] That saying summed up the evolution that



Mass celebration in Havana Jan. 2, 1959, day after U.S.-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista fled Cuba. “If Fidel is communist, then put me on the list,” was popular expression, says Hart. “From then on, education and culture were placed at the center of political and social activity.”

was taking place naturally in the patriotic consciousness of the vast majority of the people. This marked for all time the originality of our process, going back to the Cuban revolutionary tradition of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

From then on, education and culture were placed at the center of political and social activity and of the challenges facing a nation located “at the crossroads” of the world, which had adopted as its own the highest values of Western culture placing itself irrevocably on the side of the poor.

In those days of January 1959 I arrived at a building in Old Havana that had been the seat of the House of Representatives during the initial years of the Republic and later the Ministry of Education. I was twenty-eight years old. Inspired by Martí's idea, “To be educated is the only way to be free,” I assumed the responsibility for guiding the radical transformation of education in Cuba on the basis of these objectives:

- Extending instruction to the entire school-age population, and eradicating illiteracy in the adult population.
- Promoting a general reform of instruction based on offering a scientific and rounded education combined with training in ethical and patriotic values inspired by Cuban culture rooted in Martí's ideas.
- Facilitating communication and strengthening ties between the family, the school, and the community as a cen-

tral element of the educational process.

- Promoting and fostering the people's participation in the tasks of the ministry. Developing close relations with social and mass organizations.
- Having administrative and technical decentralization in order to achieve these purposes.

In Cuba more than a million people were illiterate; 50 percent of the school-age children had no access to education; high school and university education were far more limited. That is why one of the first measures taken by the Ministry of Education of the revolutionary government was the creation of classrooms all over the country. Five thousand classrooms for nine thousand unemployed teachers could be created just with the financial resources available in the long list of “*botellas*” [pay-offs] formerly handed out by the Ministry of Education of the old regime. When I told Fidel I was going to devote myself to creating five thousand classrooms, he pointed out that we should talk to the teachers and ask them to cut their salaries in half and thus create twice as many classrooms — ten thousand — with agreement that their salaries would then be raised gradually in a short number of years. That's what was done.

Broadening educational services was a priority from the very first moments, clearly exemplified by the creation of the ten thousand new classrooms, the conversion of garrisons into schools, and

the nationalization of private schools. ...

An entire generation of young people, students, and teachers, of cadres of mass organizations, began their revolutionary lives, and their historic contributions to the country, in that literacy drive, which had its most immediate antecedents in the literacy efforts conducted by the Rebel Army during the insurrectional struggle.

During the 1961 campaign 300,000 Cubans were organized, among them more than 100,000 student brigadistas in the Conrado Benítez brigades, 121,000 popular literacy teachers, 35,000 teachers integrated as cadres and specialists, and 15,000 workers in the “Patria o muerte” brigades. To this we must add an untold number of workers in all areas, as well as administrative and service personnel, whose efforts were indispensable to assuring the material and organizational success of the campaign.

The high proportion of young people among that impressive mobilization of literacy teachers was an extremely important fact. That campaign became the first great mass undertaking by a new generation. Youth who were too young to participate in the struggle against the tyranny were given a no-less-heroic task at the triumph of the revolution: that of defending the country and the revolutionary program, one of whose points was the elimination of illiteracy. A legion of these youth went to every corner of the country—workbook, textbook, and lantern in hand—to teach reading and writing. They learned the first political lesson of their lives as literacy teachers. Our young students and teachers taught more than 700,000 Cubans, as they simultaneously learned from them that being rooted in the people as a whole is the fundamental thing in order to create and advance in a revolution.

The literacy campaign, in short, was an educational and cultural act that created revolutionary consciousness in new generations. It was part of the intense popular movement, with deep aspirations for the radical renovation the country was living through in the revolution's early years. In those beautiful days, centuries of ignorance and exploitation came crashing down.

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December

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8

The Militant December 2, 2013



# Fight for universal health care!

The working class needs to fight for universal, government-guaranteed health care, paid for through general revenue, for the working class for the lifetime of each and all of its members.

This is the only course that can begin to alleviate the grind of deteriorating health care for working people under capitalism in decline.

Today our unions stand weakened by a decades-long course of collaboration with the bosses by the union officialdom and refusal to campaign for the interests of the entire working class and its allies, which includes the failure to fight for universal health care. Instead — for those workers in unions — so-called fringe benefits were more and more tied to company profits, eroding both the fighting spirit and solidarity of the working class.

Obamacare was cobbled together by the rulers, who today are opposed to any moves toward a government-funded health care system. They see no reason not to hold onto as much of the surplus value they extract from our labor as they can. The scheme is designed to guarantee superprofits for the giant insurance companies and other sectors of the so-called health “industry.”

It is built on soaking the young and healthy to pay for the elderly and infirm, one way young and old are

increasingly being pitted against each other.

To administer the complex program, a new government bureaucracy has been created, interlaced with the insurance barons, that will make “economical and practical” decisions regarding the lives of millions — like the “death panels” that will decide when you are too old and sick to warrant continuing care.

The decline in health care also unfolds apace in countries where working people wrested a national health care system from the employing class, like in the United Kingdom and Canada. As long as capital rules, all reforms won in struggle are eventually diluted, distorted and turned into their opposite. This is why the working class must chart a road to take political power.

This is the lesson of the Cuban Revolution. After the workers and peasants there, led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement, overthrew the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista regime, they carried out a thoroughgoing transformation of society in their own interests. Among the many conquests was the de-commodification of medicine and the construction of a universal health care system run on one simple idea — maximizing the well-being of the entire population. You go to the doctor to get the preventative care and treatment you need. No insurance, no bills.

## ‘Obamacare’ and health care crisis for workers

**Continued from front page**

ding costs of providing employee insurance.

Rather than addressing the problem of declining health care for the vast majority, the act is geared toward reversing the declining number of working people without health insurance. And rather than move toward a government-funded health care system, it creates a massive government bureaucracy to administer the capitalist insurance market and foists the burden on millions of individuals to find and purchase insurance.

Under Obamacare you’re “not getting health-care from the government,” writes financial analyst Jonathan Tepper. You’re “being forced to buy from private companies that have pricing power and market dominance.”

The rollout of Obamacare’s complex federal and state insurance exchanges, which opened Oct. 1, has been marked by chaos, confusion and computer shutdowns. Over its first month and a half, only about 100,000 signed up on government websites.

The president also promised that anyone who wanted to would keep their previous insurance policy under Obamacare. But the market decided otherwise, and at least 3.5 million people received notices of cancelation from insurance companies seeking higher profits under the new scheme, according to Associated Press.

Obama went on television to apologize. More than three dozen Democrats in the House voted with Republicans for legislation authorizing renewal of the canceled health insurance policies.

### Roots of capitalist ‘health care’ crisis

The way the health care crisis for working people is unfolding in the U.S. today has roots in the failure of the labor movement to fight for the broad interests of the working class over decades, explains Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, in *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*:

“For 25 years, beginning in the second half of the 1940s, prolonged capitalist economic expansion made it possible for broad layers of U.S. working people to wrest significant concessions from the exploiters,” wrote Barnes in 1985. “That quarter century, however, was also marked by the institutionalization of the class-collaborationist methods of the union bureaucracy, and a political retreat of the labor movement. The result was a terrible weakening of the unions. But this fact was hidden, since workers were able to continue wresting gains from the employers despite the obstacles of the class-collaborationist policies followed by the union misleaders. ...

“The bureaucracy turned its back on any fight for nationwide government health care and improved retirement benefits for the working population as a whole. Instead, it sought to negotiate industry-by-industry ‘fringe benefits,’ more and more tied to the profits of individual industries and companies.”

“It’s almost like a march back toward feudalism,” Barnes writes in another section of the book. “These fringes are good in good times — for workers who have them — because they’re a substantial addition to everything else industrial workers can count on. But when the squeeze comes, this all begins to fall apart.”

The percentage of workers with employer-sponsored health insurance coverage has continued to decline, dropping to 59.5 percent in 2011, a 10 percent drop from 11 years earlier. And the number of uninsured with no health coverage rose to 48 million in 2012, according to the Census Bureau.

The rulers have decided in their majority to deal with this development by mandating everyone purchase policies, or pay fines — more than \$2,000 per family by 2016. And to foist greater insurance costs on those younger and healthier, to even out prices.

According to a Nov. 5 Manhattan Institute report, insurance premiums on the exchanges are going up an average of 41 percent in 49 states, with only New York seeing a decline. And the plans often have restricted coverage with higher deductibles.

In the short term, Obamacare will likely be better for some and worse for others. But maintaining profit as the force behind the organization of health care ensures that as the crisis of capitalism deepens, the quality of medical care for the working class will continue to decline. And it is becoming clearer the new scheme poses new problems of its own.

For younger workers, premiums are rising the most — nearly 100 percent for young men and about 60 percent for younger women, according to Department of Health and Human Services figures.

Of the 2,500 counties served by federal exchanges, 58 percent have plans offered by just one or two insurance companies. In some 530 of them, only a single insurance company sets rates and coverage.

Millions of low-wage workers face a crisis in obtaining health insurance as their income levels are above those qualifying for Medicaid but too low to qualify for subsidies.

And because of a provision that allows employers to opt out of providing insurance or paying a \$2,000 fine for those working less than 30 hours a week, many employers are slashing workers’ hours, leaving them with less income and no coverage.

## Kellogg lockout

**Continued from front page**

company cut off medical insurance for union members the same day.

The central issue in the lockout is Kellogg’s drive to introduce temporary, part-time workers and cuts to pay and benefits for new hires, establishing a two-tier scale.

Kellogg spokeswoman Kris Charles told the *Battle Creek Enquirer* Nov. 12 that future hires would be full time, but that they would be paid “competitive wages,” about \$6 an hour less than current employees.

BCTGM locals at Kellogg plants in Memphis; Battle Creek, Mich.; Omaha, Neb.; and Lancaster, Penn., are covered by a common master agreement that has been in place for 50 years and was most recently approved in 2012.

A supplemental local contract at the Memphis plant expired Oct. 20. Local 252G says the company’s proposals should be negotiated under the master agreement, not the local one. But Kellogg gave Local 252G members an ultimatum to either accept the company’s “last and best offer” or be locked out.

Local 252G members, who come to work from nearby Mississippi and Arkansas, as well as from Memphis, have picketed around-the-clock since the lockout began, waving at the steady stream of drivers honking in support.

A week after the lockout started the company began bringing in replacement workers. Local 252G President Kevin Bradshaw, who along with the other local officers works in the plant, estimates that 50 to 60 scabs transported on buses with blacked-out windows are working on each of two 12-hour shifts.

The locked-out unionists are reaching out for solidarity from working people in the area, including civil rights organizations, churches and other unions. On Nov. 7, hundreds, including members of the United Auto Workers; Teamsters; city workers, electrical and other unions, attended a union-organized prayer vigil in front of the Kellogg plant.

“This lockout is an unacceptable tactic designed to deprive families of income and medical coverage in an effort to force the changes you seek through the imposition of unwarranted economic duress,” Dwight Montgomery, president of the Memphis chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, wrote to Kellogg President and CEO John Bryant Nov. 7.

“Bringing casual workers into the plant is a way to put us against each other,” said Norris Roberts, 55, a packaging mechanic at the plant. “I’m on the picket line for those who aren’t hired yet.” If Kellogg wins in Memphis, they will go after the longtime workers next, Roberts said. “That’s why all the other plants are looking at us.”

## Philippines

**Continued from page 6**

erator at a bakery.

“Sometimes they have given us rice, but they only give us one or two kilos for the whole family, it’s not enough.”

Washington and other imperialist powers have been dispensing aid with an eyedropper. The U.S. aircraft carrier George Washington, with a crew of 5,000 and 80 aircraft, arrived off the coast of Tacloban Nov. 14, six days after the storm hit. Washington has pledged a mere \$20 million in aid so far. The United Kingdom has pledged \$32 million.

Meanwhile, the foreign debt of the Philippines topped \$60 billion last year, and there is no suggestion to forgive one penny. A quarter of the population lives hand to mouth on less than \$1.25 a day, allowing no reserves to get by following a major disaster.

The *Los Angeles Times* reported Nov. 15 that relatives have been lining up in Cebu every day to get ferry tickets to take them to Ormoc with supplies for the disaster zone. The paper interviewed bank worker Dimples Juntilla who brought supplies to Ormoc earlier in the week and was heading back with more.

“I don’t want to blame the government, but it is so disheartening that it took our president five days to get relief to us,” she said. “They say it is difficult to travel, but why are we able to and they are not?”